

Natick Police Department, K9 Axel has been awarded a ballistic vest



Pictured Stacey Scharf and Tracey Valletti of Essex Rehabilitation and Nursing Center with Officer Michael Mabardy and Axel

The [Natick Police Department K9, Axel](#) has received a ballistic vest thanks to a non profit organization, Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. and Essex Park Rehabilitation and Nursing Center. The third annual “Charity Dog Wash” was hosted on August 16 at the Essex Park location in Beverly, MA. Proceeds of \$950 covered the cost for the vest for the Natick K9.

K9 Handler Officer Michael Mabardy and his partner Axel attended the Boston Police 14 week K9 Patrol Academy graduating in December 2013. Officer Mabardy joined the Natick Police Department in November 2011. During his time with the Natick Police Department he has demonstrated his commitment to providing a safe environment for the

community. He is known as a tireless worker who aggressively enforces the laws of the Commonwealth and of the Town of Natick to ensure a safe and pleasant community to live and work. These are the characteristics that make him the perfect K9 handler as these are the attributes you want from a police K9. K9 Axel fits these characteristics. Axel is 2 year old male German Shepherd. He was purchased from Northeast K-9 in Raynham MA. Axel is trained and certified in Tracking, Apprehension, Handler Protection, Evidence Recovery, and Obedience. He is an enthusiastic and energetic K9. He is eager to work and possess a high drive to succeed. He aggressively completes his training and has performed well in his short time since his certification. Axel loves to work, and does not like days off. Axel was recently certified in Narcotics detection.

Chief James Hicks stated, “The Natick Police Department is grateful of the work of Vested Interest in K9s, Inc and specifically Natick native Stacey Scharf in supporting the purchase of this important piece of equipment. Now all of our officers and our K9 now wear vest to protect them when they are out patrolling the community and responding to calls for service.”

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. is a 501c (3) charity located in East Taunton, MA. whose mission is to provide bullet and stab protective vests and other assistance to dogs of law enforcement and related agencies throughout the United States. Each vest costs \$950.00 and has a 5 year warranty. The nonprofit was established in 2009 to assist law enforcement agencies with this potentially life saving body armor for their four legged K9 Officers. Through private and corporate sponsorships, Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. provided over 1125 law enforcement dogs in 40 states with protective vests since 2009 at a cost of \$1,068,750.



Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. announces their 2015 calendar on sale now through February 2015 for \$15.00 online at www.vik9s.org . Proceeds from the sales will provide bullet and stab protective vests all goods and services for the calendar were donated by generous sponsors, photographers and participating law enforcement agency for police dogs actively working without the potentially lifesaving equipment.

The organization orders the U.S. made vests exclusively from distributor Regency Police Supply in Hyannis, MA. Who also does the custom embroidery on the body armor.

New K9 graduates as well as K9's with expired vests are eligible to participate. The program is open to law enforcement dogs who are US employed, certified and at least 19 months of age.

For more information or to learn about volunteer opportunities, please call 508-824-6978. Tax deductible donations accepted via mail to: Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. P.O. Box 9 East Taunton, MA 02718 or via the website: www.vik9s.org.